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## **Mesquite Boulevard Corridor Plan**

**Brand and Position Recommendations**  
**Revised January 2009**

**Prepared For:**  
**RBF Consulting**

**Submitted By:**  
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## CURRENT BRAND OR MARKET POSITION

Mesquite Boulevard is the primary business district for the City of Mesquite. Although there has been new commercial development to the west of town (Wal-Mart), the Boulevard still retains the majority of professional and service based businesses, provides all of the public services for the community including City Hall, Library, Recreation Center and the Post Office, has an elementary school and college as part of the business mix and is the home of the arts and cultural venues for Mesquite. Most of the businesses are locally owned and operated. The area is clean and has well-maintained medians that help soften the wide, four lanes of traffic. The Central Business District is at the far east end of the Boulevard and is anchored by the City Hall building, the Fine Arts Center and Gallery, the Virgin Valley Heritage Museum and the City's Recreation Center. The area is walkable, well kept and nicely landscaped. A solid housing stock surrounds both the Boulevard and the Central Business District providing a built in market for the area. However, with all the strengths of the Boulevard and the Central Business District there are a number of weaknesses or areas for improvement. This includes a number of empty, underutilized dirt lots, neglected, unattractive buildings, vacancies, and lack of attractions or things to do to keep consumers coming to the district on a regular basis. The Boulevard has good bones but needs to be strengthened both visually as well as economically. The Central Business District has the desire to be the heart of the community but lacks that identity or *brand* to support and create that sense of place.

## BRANDING FRAMEWORK

There appears to be no unified visual concept (logo) or message targeted solely at marketing or *branding* Mesquite Boulevard or the Central Business District. It appears that there has been several attempts at "branding" Mesquite as a community with the following taglines, "*Diamond in the Desert*" and "*Come for a Day, Stay for a Lifetime*" however there is not a tagline or slogan specific to the Boulevard or the Central Business District. The City of Mesquite has been doing an excellent job integrating their simple yet very professional logo throughout many of the City's venues including the new way finding signage, the brass historical markers, the City's website and some of their marketing materials. As a result, the logo has started to become a recognizable image as it relates to City programs, publications and/or projects. The Mesquite Area Chamber of Commerce has done an excellent job with branding itself. All of their materials have

incorporated the Chamber's logo and tagline. The same is true for the Mesquite Fine Arts Center and Gallery as well as the Greater Mesquite Arts Foundation. Both of these organizations have very professional logos that are prominently used throughout their marketing materials.

The consultant is recommending that two separate branding concepts be considered-- one for the Corridor and a second, different one for the Central Business District. Due to the differences in both the physical make up as well as the separate *visions* that the community has for the two areas, the consultant feels that Mesquite has the advantage of repositioning itself in the marketplace by exploring the opportunities of branding Mesquite Boulevard differently than the Central Business District. Based on the intercept surveys, input from the stakeholder interviews and the responses shared during the Community Immersion, the following Branding Frameworks have been created for each of the two areas. The consultant is recommending that the Central Business District be branded as *Downtown Mesquite* and that the rest of the Corridor area be branded as *The Boulevard*. The objective of the Branding Framework is to provide various key messages related to establishing and building each of the area's brands.

#### Branding Framework – Mesquite Boulevard

Brand Elements	Strategies, Descriptions, Observations
<b>Brand Products/Service</b>	Long, linear commercial corridor that consists of a wide street with four lanes of traffic that is divided by a well kept, landscaped median. Variety of businesses line sides of the street including service, professional, restaurants, retail and entertainment. Most businesses are locally owned and operated. Civic uses are also located on the Boulevard including the Post Office and City Hall.
<b>Branding Position (Current)</b>	The Boulevard has a well-established business mix with a variety of uses. Most businesses are destination based and do not necessarily depend upon foot traffic for survival. The medians are very attractive and they manage access to businesses to protect mobility for everyone. Several empty lots are primed for new development. The area is lacking uniformity in design and architectural integrity with some of the building needing drastic repair. There is a sense among the community that the area is in direct competition with the new development occurring at the west of town (Wal- Mart).
<b>Brand Target</b>	Mesquite residents Travelers off I-15 who are often staying overnight at one of the casinos/hotels.

<b>Brand Name</b>	<i>The Boulevard.</i> Even though the actual name of the Boulevard is Mesquite Boulevard, when asked people, many refer to this part of the corridor as <i>The Boulevard</i> .
<b>Brand Message</b>	<i>The Boulevard – Where Everything Comes Together</i> -- entertainment, business, shopping restaurants and even the Post Office. If you need something, most likely you can find it on <i>The Boulevard</i> where a familiar face will always greet you with a smile and warm welcome.

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### Branding Framework – The Central Business District

Brand Elements	Strategies, Descriptions, Observations
<b>Brand Products/Service</b>	The Central Business District houses the majority of the historical, cultural and art related uses. There is a sprinkling of retail related businesses balanced with additional professional and service based businesses. The median extends through the CBD however the density of the area makes it much more pedestrian friendly than the rest of Mesquite Boulevard.
<b>Branding Position (Current)</b>	The Central Business District (CBD) is the east gateway to Mesquite Boulevard. City Hall, Virgin Valley Heritage Museum and the Mesquite Fine Arts Center and Gallery anchor the area along the Boulevard. The City's Recreation Center and Park, the County Library and College are located several blocks off the Boulevard providing additional uses deeper within the CBD. There is a sprinkling of additional retail related businesses along with a small casino and more professional and service based businesses. The median extends through the CBD however the density of the area makes it much more pedestrian friendly than the rest of Mesquite Boulevard. As with the Boulevard, most of the businesses are locally owned and operated.
<b>Brand Target</b>	Mesquite residents Households within a 30 to 40 minute drive time. Visitors that are not necessarily staying the night but need to take a break for an hour or so. Travelers off of I-15 who are often staying overnight at one of the casinos/hotels
<b>Brand Name</b>	<i>Downtown Mesquite</i>
<b>Brand Message</b>	<i>Downtown Mesquite- Honoring Tradition, Celebrating Community.</i> Visit a museum, have an ice cream cone, see a neighbor, enjoy a festival. There is always something to do in downtown. Be our guest and enjoy Mesquite Hospitality at it's finest.

#### VISION STATEMENT

A vision statement gives shape and direction to the future. It is essential to the creation of a unified presence in the marketplace and provides a common view around which to build and impactful marketing programs. A vision statement should be compelling enough to excite people and have them be proud and committed to a common goal. Using some of the key points shared during the October 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> Community Immersion, below are two draft vision statements for consideration—one for Mesquite Boulevard and one for the Central Business District.

**Vision Statement - Mesquite Boulevard** Everything you need is located on the Boulevard – business, entertainment, and opportunity. There is a sense of pride along the Boulevard with well-kept storefronts and properties, medians that are nicely landscaped, and public amenities that are visually appealing. Residents and visitors alike can easily find businesses along the Boulevard and access is straightforward. There is a variety of larger entertainment venues including casinos, chain restaurants, and theaters that all work together. Newer developments complement the existing commercial areas and improve the streetscape by placing buildings closer to the street and large parking lots to the side or rear of buildings. There are pockets along the Boulevard that offer areas for relaxation and encourage walkability. A trolley links the entire Boulevard and helps move people from one area to another making frequent stops along the way and connecting the major hotel/casino resorts within the City. *The Boulevard is where locals shop and visitors explore. The Boulevard is where everything comes together.*

**Vision Statement – Downtown Mesquite** Downtown Mesquite is the heart of the community. Downtown is the keeper of Mesquite’s unique history, protects the area’s treasures, and is the home to many of the City’s arts and cultural venues. Downtown includes new paseos and plazas that link the existing City Hall, the Old Gym, the Heritage Museum, and Fine Arts Center, to a variety of new shops and an outdoor amphitheater. There are regularly scheduled events that generate interest and excitement for the community and offer additional activities for visitors. Downtown is still the home to many locally-owned professional and service businesses, but it also supports new boutiques, galleries, restaurants, cafes, and other types of unique shops. The once empty lots within the Downtown have been developed with new mixed-use and residential buildings that are designed to respect the environment, climate, and heritage of the community. The Community is proud of its downtown and keeps the area clean, pristine and landscaped. *Downtown Mesquite: Honoring Tradition, Celebrating Community.*

#### GOAL AND OBJECTIVES SPECIFIC FOR EACH AREA TO INITIATE THE BRANDING PROCESS

A visual logo and key message or *tagline* is only a small part of the branding process. For business districts and downtowns, their *brand* or identity is closely linked with the area’s image or perception. **Every aspect** of the business district contributes to their brand or identity; not just the logo or message that is used on the website or in the brochure. Too often, communities spend

precious resources developing fancy logos or messages but fall short from achieving their vision or *brand* because they fail to address the area's perception or overall image. Important elements that also contribute to the overall *brand* or image of a business district or downtown area include how the empty lots and storefronts present themselves to potential investors, the overall health and variety of the business mix, the types of promotional activities used to create excitement and draw people to the area and how well the business community works together. A logo and tagline only helps deliver the message in the short run. It is how a community really feels about itself and "sells" that to investors and consumers that *brands* it for the long term. The consultant is recommending that, in addition to developing a logo and tagline, the following four core Goals be considered to support the branding process followed by specific objectives to support each specific goal.

**Goal: Brand the Boulevard as a Distinct Business District within the Community.**

**Goal: Brand the Central Business District as the Arts, Cultural and Social Center of the Community.**

**Goal: Improve the Image or Community Perception of Both the Boulevard and the Central Business District.**

**Goal: Continue to Build the Capacity and Organizational Infrastructure to Support Implementation of the Corridor Plan.**

**PRIMARY GOAL 1: BRAND THE BOULEVARD AS A DISTINCT BUSINESS DISTRICT WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.**

**Objective 1.1** **Develop a separate logo and tagline for The Boulevard.** To reinforce the brand message and start to brand The Boulevard as a distinct business district within the community, the area needs a separate logo/slogan to help identify it. The logo/slogan should be carried out in all marketing communication vehicles use to market or promote The Boulevard such as printed marketing materials, advertising, websites, recruitment pieces, banners, kiosks, signage, etc. Encourage businesses to start to refer to the area as *The Boulevard* and even incorporate the perspective logo/slogan in their individual advertising. Henderson's Water Street District is an excellent example of how a business district within a community has defined itself by developing its own logo and slogan.



**Objective 1.2 Enhance the City's website to better represent The Boulevard.** The Internet has changed the way people shop, obtain information on goods and services, and determine what the family plans should be for the weekend. Consumers simply type in the area they want to visit, information they want to receive, or the activity they want to experience and instantly hundreds of listings are in front of them. The City's website is currently functioning as the central point of information about the community in general. It does list the key attractions and links to their perspective sites. To help define The Boulevard and start to brand it as a distinct business district in the community, develop a separate area or page on the City's website for the district. The new page should serve as the primary marketing instrument for increasing awareness of The Boulevard and begin to become the central point for locals to learn about the various types of businesses located along the area, any special events or promotions and business development opportunities. All publicity, advertising and other marketing communications promoting The Boulevard should refer back to the web site. The site should be crossed link to as many attractions and related sites as possible. One example is how the City of Henderson positioned the Water Street District as a distinct business district on their website <http://www.waterstreetdistrict.com>.

**Objective 1.3 Produce one brochure that is comprehensive, quality and unified in its message and promotes The Boulevard's new brand and image.** As The Boulevard begins to *brand* itself as a distinct business district, it will be imperative that any marketing collateral that is used to support the brand and attract consumers to the area must be aligned with this vision. Conveying the *brand* to the target markets will require multiple paths delivering a consistent message. It is recommended that one quality, comprehensive, professional brochure be produced that promotes The Boulevard as the destination and provides an overview of the various types of businesses, amenities and activities. This brochure would more detailed than the one that is currently distributed by the Las Vegas Conference and Visitors Authority but not as detailed as the Business Directory produced by the Mesquite Downtown Advisory Committee. The following should be considered in the development of the new brochure:

- Unified logo and tag line



- A map of The Boulevard indicating cross streets, parking areas and other key points of interest
- An overall listing of the types of businesses and services that can be found on The Boulevard
- Listing of any annual events or promotions that may be held on The Boulevard
- Brief background on the history of area as well as its exciting future
- Contact information including phone number and website for additional information.

Format of the brochure should be designed so that is suitable to fit in brochure racks, informational kiosks and as a promotional mailer. It should also be available to download on the City Web Site. Determine a distribution plan, placing brochures in key places (City Hall, key businesses along The Boulevard, Chamber of Commerce, Visitor's center, Del Webb, real estate offices, etc.) where it will be visible to residents, visitors and employees.

**Objective 1.4** **Develop a series of promotional and advertising venues targeted directly to reach the new residents moving into the area as well as the part time residents who are returning for the winter.** A series of direct mail, special promotions, mini events and other creative marketing efforts targeted directly to penetrate the new resident and returning residents should be considered. Several recommendations include:

- **Bi-yearly Direct Mail piece to new residents/returning residents** Create an interesting, professional direct mail piece that acts as an invitation to come to The Boulevard. Work with Del Webb to coordinate the mailing and obtain a listing of new residents. Consider as part of the direct mail piece offering a discount coupon and make sure to list all of the upcoming events. To assist with offsetting the cost of the printing and mailing, consider offering Boulevard businesses the opportunity to advertise or sponsor it.

- **Host a “Walkabout The Boulevard” Event in Conjunction with the City’s “Welcome Back BBQ”.** Piggyback on the City’s existing event and build a “mini” event that is focused at getting new residents, seasonal residents and even existing residents that have not been to the area for a while to come to The Boulevard and walk through the various businesses, restaurants and other attractions. Participants are invited to come and visit the various venues throughout the day. Participating businesses provide visitors with a little gift or freebie and coupon inviting them to come back for future purchases. In turn, visitors get their “Boulevard ticket” punched and when full they are eligible for the big “prize” or drawing. Make sure that all businesses obtain the names, addresses and emails of all those that visit their establishment to help build a master list that can be used for future direct mail programs.
- **Publish a yearly local media tab targeted at welcoming back the returning part time residents.** Piggyback on the above referenced “Welcome Back” event and consider publishing an insert (often referred to as a tab) in the local media promoting The Boulevard and inviting returning residents (as well as other residents) to the business district. The Tab should include editorial about The Boulevard, its history, upcoming events, interesting stories about key businesses or individuals, etc. The Tab should also include a map of the business district, a complete listing of all the businesses and identify key attractions such as the post office, City Hall, public parking spaces. Talk about the local shuttle system and where convenient stops are located. Tab’s are typically financially supported by the businesses that purchase paid advertising. Encourage businesses to design their advertising at inviting residents back to their perspective businesses. Overruns of this insert can be distributed at the Chamber, City Hall, Library, Museum, etc.
- **Develop a “move-in” coupon book or package for new residents and returning residents.** Create a Boulevard coupon book that has discounts and incentives from participating businesses, as well as other related venues. Work with realtors, Del Webb, title companies, etc to distribute the coupon book to the new resident and/or returning part time residents. Consider signing up with the local “welcome wagon” or greeting service as another possible distribution channel for the coupon book. Give participating businesses books so they can then distribute them accordingly.
- **Link with local homeowners associations/neighborhood groups.** We noted that the Deb

Webb development has a Web site and newsletters. Explore the possibilities of linking to their website, writing an article in their newsletter and/or even consider advertising if available. Research what other homeowner associations or neighborhood groups may have in place as a means to promote and market The Boulevard. This could include websites, newsletters, or making a presentation at one of their meetings.

- **Participate in a local Home Show or Chamber Expo.** Consider having a booth that represents The Boulevard and the businesses at one of the local Home Shows, Fairs or Expos. Build a display that has pictures about The Boulevard's history, a listing of the businesses that are located in the area, the new brand or logo/slogan, any marketing materials and giveaways. Make sure that names and emails of those who stop by the booth are captured and added to the Master mailing list for future promotions.

**Objective 1.5** **Quarterly Cluster Advertising** The Boulevard businesses that advertise on a regular basis should develop programs with their local advertising mediums (newspaper, radio, weekly/monthly direct mail advertising, etc.) to cluster their advertisements on the same page(s) with a heading that showcases The Boulevard's logo/slogan. Consider other cluster advertising opportunities such as:

- **Direct Mail.** If strategically mailed with the right message and some type of "carrot" or offering, direct mail is still a very effective low cost advertising venue. Businesses should consider working together and create a full color, very professional postcard that is direct mailed to their combined customer base. Offer some type of gift or discount on the postcard so that businesses can track the responses. To be fully effective, businesses need to start gathering mailing addresses AND emails so that they can then compile a master list to use for the direct mail campaign. Geolocation technology allows businesses to target their marketing by city, zip code or even distance. You can purchase a list of addresses for a specific area by zip code and even filter the list by demographic information. One such site is [www.infousa.com](http://www.infousa.com). There is a fee for purchasing the list, however by identifying the specific market you want to penetrate and profiling the individuals you want to attract (such as families, income bracket, age), your investment should have a much higher rate of return than just randomly mailing out postcards.

- **E-marketing** As with direct mail, e-marketing is another effective and very low cost marketing tool, which many businesses have started to utilize in their own businesses. E-newsletters promote news, upcoming events and special promotions. Businesses who are clustering their advertising should duplicate the postcard as mentioned above and email it out to those individuals email addresses. Again, businesses need to know how to e-market as a way to stay in front of their customers. In addition, as email addresses are gathered, add these to the master list so that a district wide e-marketing piece can be distributed easily in the future.

**Objective 1.6** Establish a regular promotional calendar that lists all the various activities and promotions that each business and/or strip mall is hosting along The Boulevard. Like many business districts that are located in a fast growing region, people often do not think about going to an older business area first. Residents often will visit a newer development that is closer to their home and has the chains or franchises that are familiar. The Boulevard is comprised of independent businesses that may not have the same name recognition as the chains or the resources to penetrate the market on a regular basis. As a result, these businesses are often not in the consumers front of mind when it comes to deciding where to go. The Boulevard must become the destination and pull people to the area. There are a number of businesses and strip malls along the Boulevard that already have on-going promotions targeted at attracting customers. A master list of these promotions should be developed and then the businesses should look at any gaps that need to be filled either by starting a new promotion and/or piggy backing on one that is already established but could be expanded. The types of events or promotions that work well for a business district such as The Boulevard include:

- Bi yearly “Everything is on Sale on the Boulevard”
- No Sales Tax in April Sale
- Boulevard wide Easter Egg hunt
- Boulevard Block Party- Food, Fun, Entertainment, Shopping
- Welcome Back to The Boulevard Scavenger Hunt
- It’s Too Hot To Shop Sale
- Santa Claus is Coming to the Boulevard

In addition to the above referenced promotions, link to the traditional types of holidays that many businesses already offer special activities such as Mother's Day, Father's Day, Memorial and Labor Day, etc. Encourage businesses that typically advertising or do a special promotion on these traditional holidays to cluster their advertising together and promote it as an entire Boulevard promotion. On a quarterly basis, create a poster that lists ALL the upcoming events, promotions and activities that will be held on the Boulevard that are either hosted by individual businesses and/or organizations. Have businesses post the posters in their windows, pass them out to customers, post on their individual websites, etc. Make sure that the poster is also downloaded on The Boulevard's website.

**Objective 1.7** **Expand the banner program.** Both *Downtown* and The Boulevard have light poles with the ability to install banners along them. Continue to support and expand upon the seasonal banner program that has already been implemented along the Boulevard. Banners will add interest to the streetscape and help define the area as a distinct business district. Try to have at least four sets of banners that could be easily rotated throughout the year. One set should promote the holiday season, one should have The Boulevard's logo/slogan, one set could promote a *Shop Local* theme and one could be dedicated to welcoming back the part time residents returning for the winter.

**PRIMARY GOAL 2: BRAND THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AS THE ARTS, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL CENTER OF THE COMMUNITY.**

**Objective 2.1** **Develop a separate logo/slogan for the Central Business District.** . To reinforce the brand message and start to brand the Central Business District as the arts, cultural an social center of the community and reposition it as *Downtown Mesquite*, develop a separate logo/slogan for the area. The logo/slogan should be carried out in all marketing communication vehicles used to market *Downtown* such as printed marketing materials, advertising, websites about downtown, recruitment pieces, banners, kiosks, signage, etc. Encourage businesses to start to refer to the area *Downtown Mesquite* and even incorporate the perspective logo/slogan in their individual advertising.

**Objective 2.2 Enhance the City's website to better represent the Central Business District as the arts, cultural and social center of the community.** As mentioned previously, the Internet has changed the way people shop, obtain information on goods and services, and determine what the family plans should be for the weekend. Consumers simply type in the area they want to visit, information they want to receive, or the activity they want to experience and instantly hundreds of listings are in front of them. The City's website is currently functioning as the central point of information about the community in general. It does list the key attractions and links to their perspective sites. To help define the Central Business District as the arts, cultural and social center and start to brand it as *Downtown Mesquite*, develop a separate area or page on the City's website for the area. The new page should serve as the primary marketing instrument for increasing awareness of *Downtown Mesquite* and begin to drive consumers to events, businesses and attractions. All publicity, advertising and other marketing communications promoting *Downtown Mesquite* should refer back to the web site. The site should be crossed linked to as many attractions and related sites as possible. Carson City has done an excellent job differentiating their downtown area from the rest of the City on their website <http://www.carson-city.nv.us/> that then links to the downtown page at [www.downtowncarsoncity.com](http://www.downtowncarsoncity.com)

**Objective 2.3 Implement an annual Calendar of Events to position the Central Business District as the arts, cultural and social center of the community and reinforce the brand.** It is critical for the future position of *Downtown* to have an aggressive, consistent and on-going calendar of promotions and advertising venues targeted at attracting consumers, both local and visitors, to the area. A common response throughout the focus group interviews was that individuals would come back to *Downtown* if there was more to see and do; especially family oriented activities. People need a reason or "incentive" to come back to *Downtown* for more than just going to City Hall or visiting the bank. Communities across the Nation have found that hosting an event is not only a viable way to attract consumers and visitors to a specific area but events also support their *brand* or position in the marketplace. While it takes time to create a monthly calendar of events, the City of Mesquite, the Greater Mesquite Arts Foundation and the Mesquite Fine Arts Center and Gallery already host several successful events. A series of smaller or "mini" promotions or activities that piggyback on these existing events as well as several new larger events need to be added to continue to create that additional "reason" to come to downtown and create additional foot traffic to spur economic activity. *Downtown's* natural



layout is perfect for hosting parades, smaller venues, even closed street events. In addition, the City Hall's Amphitheater is also another natural venue for hosting smaller scaled events. These two aspects give downtown the competitive edge over the newer developments. *Downtown Mesquite* should (and must) take advantage of its natural layout and **be the place** to see a movie, attend a parade, enjoy a festival or visit friends and listen to music. In turn, *Downtown Mesquite* will begin to brand itself as the arts, cultural and social center of the community. Below are examples of promotions or activities that could piggyback on the few existing events as well as suggestions for new events (which have been *italicized*). Several of the promotions and events suggested also include participation from the Boulevard. However, because the Boulevard is so linear and not as compact, the majority of street events are specifically recommended for the Central Business District only. Additional events specific to the Boulevard have been suggested in their goal and objectives.

Month	Ideas
January	<b>Downtown Mesquite and The Boulevard</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"Everything is On Sale" Come spend some time and save with your local merchants.</i></li> </ul>
February	<b>Downtown Mesquite</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Art, Chocolate and Wine Event</i></li> </ul>
March	<b>Downtown Mesquite</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Family Fun Day and Kite Competition in Downtown</i></li> </ul>
April	<b>Downtown Mesquite</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Cruising Downtown Car Show</i></li> </ul>
May	<b>Downtown Mesquite and The Boulevard</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome Back Event and Community Block Party</li> </ul> <b>Downtown Mesquite</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Weekly Concerts at the Hall (City Hall)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Add an Art walk to one of the Weekly Concerts</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Cruising Downtown Car Show</i></li> </ul>
June	<b>Downtown Mesquite</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Weekly Concerts at the Hall (City Hall)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Add an Art walk to one of the Weekly Concerts</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Cruising Downtown Car Show</i></li> </ul>
July	<b>Downtown Mesquite</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Evening movies in the Park</i></li> </ul> <b>Downtown Mesquite and The Boulevard</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade and Celebration</li> </ul>
August	<b>Downtown Mesquite</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End of Summer Event</li> </ul>
September	<b>Downtown Mesquite</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Cruising Downtown Car Show</i></li> </ul>
October	<b>Downtown Mesquite</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater Mesquite Arts Festival (recommend work towards moving this event downtown)</li> <li>• <i>Cruising Downtown Car Show</i></li> <li>• Rotary Club's Oktoberfest</li> </ul>
November	<b>Downtown Mesquite and the Boulevard</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Fall Family Festival</i></li> </ul>
December	<b>Downtown Mesquite and the Boulevard</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holiday Events and Promotions</li> </ul>



**Objective 2.4 Downtown Bazaars or Marketplace.** Over and over individuals expressed that they would like to have some type of street faire or *bazaar* in the Central Business District. It is strongly recommended that some type of regular market or bazaar be held in *Downtown*. The market could start small, be seasonal and held on a side street or in a parking lot. Explore the possibilities of having an agency/individual who already coordinates these types of street fair's in the region to assist with implementing the Market. They would have established relationships with vendors, know the rules and regulations that apply and have the ability to market and promote the Market through their media connections.

**Objective 2.5 Use the central business district as a "stage" for community events.** Many communities encourage local community events to be held in their downtown areas. To ensure that all events support *Downtown's* image and are coordinated effectively, the City in partnership with and the local businesses should consider developing a set of guidelines and procedures for those community based organizations (such as schools, civic organizations, non profit entities) to follow when using downtown as the stage for their events.

**Objective 2.6 Produce one brochure that is comprehensive, quality and unified in its message and aggressively distributes it to a variety of outlets.** As the Central Business District begins to *brand* itself as the arts, cultural and social center of the community, it will be imperative that any marketing collateral that is used to support the brand and attract consumers to the area must be aligned with this vision. Conveying the *brand* to the target markets will require multiple paths delivering a consistent message. As recommended in the objectives for The Boulevard, it is recommended that one quality, comprehensive, professional brochure that promotes *Downtown Mesquite* as a destination and provides an overview of the various types businesses, amenities and activities be produced. The same guidelines as suggested with the Boulevard brochure should be considered. The Nevada Visitor's Center indicated they often are asked by visitors for a brochure about *Downtown* but because many of the marketing collateral that is currently available has advertising and/or real estate listing, they are not allowed to hand any out. It is recommended that prior to designing the brochure, the manager at the Visitor's Center should be consulted so that the product is something that they can distribute accordingly. The brochure

should also be available to download on the City Web Site and a distribution plan that targets the visitors should be developed accordingly.

**Objective 2.7** **Expand hours that “Downtown” is open.** If the central business district is truly going to achieve its vision as an arts and cultural destination, there must be a concentrated effort focused at getting the majority of retail, entertainment based businesses, and all art, cultural and historical attractions open when the customer **wants** to be there. As with many traditional downtown business districts that are comprised of independently owned businesses, their biggest challenge or weaknesses is not being open when the consumer or **visitor** is available or wanting to come downtown to shop, stroll and visit. *Downtown* must be open to capture the traveler passing through Mesquite or retaining the visitor that may be extending their visit for several days. One strategy that other communities have implemented to assist downtown cores to make this shift of being longer hours and/or extended days is to host a specific campaign targeted at driving business to the particular day.

**Objective 2.8** **Showcase the history, arts and cultural aspects of *Downtown Mesquite* to expand cultural and heritage tourism.** Cultural and heritage tourism is defined as visits by persons from **outside** the community who are motivated by interest in historical, artistic, or lifestyle/heritage offerings of a community or region. Cultural and heritage tourism is a growing economic sector across the Nation and *Downtown Mesquite* is positioned to capitalize on this trend. Cultural and Heritage Tourism is more than historic buildings; it is the entire history of the community, its events, its people and its “culture.” *Downtown* will need to broaden its image from an interesting collection of historic buildings to include interesting things that happened in the area and the interesting people that caused them. *Downtown Mesquite* is a genuine reflection of both the community’s history and the culture. *Downtown* does not have to reinvent itself but rather promote its strongest assets—history, the arts and the community’s culture. Suggested strategies to showcase downtown’s history, arts and cultural aspects and attract the cultural and heritage tourist include:

- **Continue to produce and update, as needed, the Self-Guided Walking Tour Collateral.**  
The City of Mesquite, in partnership with the local historical organizations, has produced a

Historic Walking Tour brochure. Make sure that the brochure is up to date and widely distributed. The brochure should also be downloadable on the City's website.

- **Put a downloadable podcast on the Web site.** Never before has the online community had such an opportunity to reach its audience offline. Podcasts, like any information that is put out, should be of interest and value to the target market. A podcast is a Web-based audio broadcast via an RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed, accessed by subscription over the Internet. Podcasts are another marketing tool that you can use to promote the historical and cultural aspects of *Downtown*. Gen Y (echo boomers – kids of Baby Boomers) is using podcasts to keep up with news, information and missed TV shows – but **Baby Boomers are catching up on the trend**. Think of a podcast as a radio show or simply as a recording available via the web. Podcasts allow you to listen to recordings when, where, and how you want on your computer, with just a web browser, or using your MP3 player or iPod.

The U.S. podcasting market has steadily been increasing in size over the last couple of years and is expected to double within the next two years to almost 38 million people, according to eMarketer. It is estimated that the total U.S. podcast audience for 2007 is 18.5 million with an active podcast audience of 6.5 million. The 18.5 million refers to individuals who have ever downloaded a podcast from anywhere. The "active" user base refers to individuals who have downloaded an average of one or more podcasts per week. The active podcast audience is expected to grow to an impressive 25 million listeners by 2012. More than 75% of all podcast listeners are male – most marketing has been aimed at female shoppers – so take advantage of the opportunity to market to a different segment of the population.

There are many reasons why podcasting is becoming more popular in the U.S. at such a fast rate. Firstly, podcast content is easy to digest. Most podcasts that are downloaded are usually short and focus on specific topics or genres, making it easy for people to listen to exactly what they are interested in and skip the fluff.

By having podcasts as part of your marketing efforts to help promote the history, arts and cultural aspects of *Downtown Mesquite*, people who are yearning to visit can download and learn more about the amenities and easily take it with them on their iPod. *Downtown* will

need to decide what they want the podcast(s) to be about. Start with a podcast, four to nine minutes in length, that is an overview – Mesquite’s history and highlights of the Museum, Art Gallery, historic buildings and related businesses. Later and more specific podcasts could include 1) a tour of the Museum and Gallery; 2) a tour of supporting galleries; 3) *Downtown* restaurants and other businesses; 4) the Greater Mesquite Arts Festival event. Subsequent podcasts can be more specific – for example, one could “take a real tour” of *Downtown Mesquite* that would include directions on the route with stops at selected venues along the way. Think about using sponsorship to help defray cost.

- **Murals** are excellent venues to showcase a community’s history/culture and attract visitors. There are a number of blank walls in *Downtown* that would make excellent “canvas.” Develop a long-term plan that identifies key locations, what type of murals would be relevant and a marketing strategy. Within the plan, the City should create mural guidelines to ensure quality. Murals should always accurately depict the historical event and preferably be painted by a professional muralist. Engage the local community college and related art programs to assist with developing the plan.
- **Windows on History Promotion** - Historical pictures and brief history of the various buildings and businesses are enlarged and placed in the windows of the corresponding locations. A brochure is created with all of the “Windows on History” locations and used to help guide individuals throughout *Downtown*. Coordinate this type of event with National Preservation Week (typically in May) as well as add additional events or venues as appropriate (such as docent led tours, special musical venues, historical storytelling, etc.)
- **Outreach to Schools** – If not already in place, work with the historical organizations to put together a program about *Downtown Mesquite’s* history and culture for students when they study local Nevada history. Proclaim local history month. Arrange for tours of the Museum and other key historical or art related structures. Take the students on a Historical Walking Tour. This exposure to *Downtown’s* history to local students will be passed along to parents, who will be exposed to *Downtown* through their children.

- **Outreach to Community** – Local service clubs and community groups are interested in local history and culture. Consider a monthly article in the local newspaper about *Downtown's* history and interesting personalities.
- **Offer information/tours to travel writers** – Contact travel writers with information about the historical, arts and cultural aspects of *Downtown Mesquite*. Distribute pertinent information to regional tourism groups.

**Objective 2.9 Create positive media stories to enhance *Downtown's* brand.** Media generally tends to reinforce negative aspects of the downtown—vacancies, businesses closing, after-hour trouble, vandalism, etc. Efforts need to focus on actively identifying positive news stories and promoting them through a variety of media venues. Several strategies for consideration are:

- **Distribute regular press releases about Downtown** In addition to promoting the events, create and distribute regular press releases about new business openings, expansions and anniversaries. Profile unique business practices and products. Profile unique business owners, property owners, and/or employee personalities and accomplishments. Post the releases on the *Downtown's* website (or page).
- **Bi-yearly media tab specific for Downtown.** As mentioned in the objectives for *The Boulevard*, create and distribute of a tab that is specific to *Downtown Mesquite*. Supported by advertising, the tab should include articles about specific downtown businesses, the historic aspects of downtown, a calendar of events, a business directory, a parking map, and other interesting stories about people, places and things. The tab should be distributed at least twice a year and targeted for new residents and visitors. The publication should include *Downtown's* logo and slogan and be as professional as possible.
- **"Downtown Mesquite- Honoring Tradition, Celebrating Community" Weekly Column and Radio Spot.** Chambers of Commerce often has a weekly column or "five minute" radio spot to showcase what is happening related to the business community and Chamber activities. Work with local media including newspaper, radio and public cable access, to have a weekly spot that promotes "*Downtown Mesquite*". Media can be hesitant if they believe that the weekly column or radio spots will be marketing specific downtown businesses so efforts will

need to focus on what is new in downtown as a whole and general interest stories. This would include an update of new redevelopment projects, upcoming community events, volunteers of the week, art and cultural events, etc. If media is not cooperative and the Chamber or City already has a spot or column, discuss the possibilities of providing regular information to them to include in their broadcasts or columns.

**Objective 2.10 Search out low to no cost advertising targeted at reaching the visitor market.**

In addition to leveraging publicity and the “free advertising” that may result, concentrate on searching out any no to low cost advertising opportunities available. Focus first on uncovering opportunities that target the regional visitor market and then explore what is available for visitors interested in visiting Nevada from other states. Below are suggested strategies:

- **Reach out to the visitors that come to Mesquite for sports related activities.** Work with the City’s Park and Recreation to identify groups that will be coming to Mesquite for sports related activities and create special promotions or packages targeted at this market. This might include a special “Welcome to *Downtown Mesquite*” coupon book that offers discounts and two for one specials at local businesses, a special packet with business coupons, walking tour, etc. Consider working with complementary businesses located on the Boulevard to expand offerings and really provide these visitors with a “prize” packet.
- **Bundle activities with local sectors.** An effective way to expand the inventory offerings and help extend visitors stay in the Mesquite longer is to bundle or package various activities, services and amenities. Offer “escape for the weekend” getaways bundling lodging, dining, a visit to the Gallery, etc. as the package. Offer packages oriented toward attracting families bundling a tour of the museum, lunch and a movie etc. Work with local sectors to brainstorm on various packages. Again, reach out to complementary businesses along the Boulevard. Post the packages on *Downtownw’s* Web site as well as encourage the local business sectors to also promote them through their marketing channels.
- **Itinerary Section on the Web site** Within the “Visitor Section” on *Downtown’s* future Web site (or page), have a page dedicated to how visitors can spend a day or a weekend in *Downtown Mesquite*. Have example itineraries listed linking to the various venues or



attractions sites. Incorporate actual pictures of people enjoying their day. List the packages that you have coordinated within this section of the Web site. Be creative and have fun with this page. Help visitors imagine a day or weekend in *Downtown*.

- **Link with other Web sites** The Internet has become one of the most cost effective marketing venues and there are numerous ways to utilize it to get a message out into the marketplace. Link with as many Web sites as possible to get your Alexa ranking (numerical ranking of all Web sites) up as much as possible. First make sure that all of *Downtown* businesses and attractions are linked with the Web site that is promoting the area (at this point that would be the City's and the Chamber's). Contact as many of them as possible and offer to cross-link. Teach them how to do it. Next, make sure that any agency or organization that interfaces with the visitor or tourist is linked to the site. Finally, research what other Web sites exist that reach the regional market and would be appropriate to link with, such the Las Vegas Conference and Visitor Authority's site.
- **Free Web site listings** Many Web sites offer free listings for events, activities and programs. Research what is available that targets the regional visitor market as well as any state and national markets. Make sure to update the listings as needed and review them often. Inform *Downtown* businesses and attractions about these Web sites and strongly encourage them to list their individual events, promotions and activities.
- **Newspapers in your regional trade area** Many local papers offer non-profits the opportunity to list, at no charge, upcoming events or activities. Look for these types of opportunities in your regional market place and take full advantage of any opportunities. Encourage *Downtown* businesses and attractions to also send information about their specific promotion or event.
- **Publications.** Look for publications that are typically distributed free within the community. No only, do these "free" publications offer free listings but they typically have lower per square inch advertising fees giving you more bang for your buck. To help brand *Downtown Mesquite* within the regional market as an arts and cultural destination, create one ad that is compelling and focused at attracting the regional visitor market. Try to use the same message and logo/slogan throughout ALL of the "paid" advertising so that a consistent



message and image is created.

- **Direct Mail.** As mentioned in the objectives related to *The Boulevard*, direct mail is still a very effective low cost advertising venue. Consider creating a full color, very professional postcard several times a year that is direct mailed to those individuals who have already discovered *Downtown Mesquite* as well as a specific targeted zip code in one of the more regional visitor markets (such as Salt Lake City, St. George). One postcard could be mailed out early spring prior to peak season listing upcoming events with another postcard mailed at the end of the season prior the holidays. Offer some type of gift or discount on the postcard so that responses can track the responses. Consider utilizing some type of Geolocation technology to target the direct mail piece.
- **E-marketing.** E-newsletters promote news, upcoming events and special promotions as well as compliment advertising and public relations outreach programs. Consider duplicating the postcard as mentioned above and email it out to those individuals who you have collected email addresses. Teach *Downtown* businesses and arts and cultural enterprises how to e-market as a way to stay in front of their customers. The general interest newsletter can be targeted to themes based on consumer interests, including art, history or families. A special “Meet Downtown Mesquite” e-newsletter can be targeted to travel trade and meeting planners.

**Objective 2.11 Foster a “visitor friendly” environment.** It will be key to *Downtown's* vision as the arts, cultural and social center of the community that the local business community and visitor points of interest foster a “visitor friendly” environment not only in marketing collateral but primarily in how a visitor is greeted, treated and followed up with. *Downtown* business owners and their frontline employees are not just cashiers, stockers, wait people, front desk personnel or gas station attendants. They are key sales people for the community. In addition to making sales for the business, they should also know about and be able to “sell” events, attractions, the *Downtown* area and the community in general. *Downtown Mesquite* must make visitors feel welcomed and comfortable so that they enjoy their experience, want to spread the news and return. Strategies to achieve this objective include:

- **Develop a training program to help educate business owners and employees about the various aspects of *Downtown Mesquite* including its history, events and attractions.**
  - Training should be offered on a quarterly basis and provide a comprehensive overview of all the areas that a visitor may want to know. Sample brochures and marketing collateral should be reviewed with trainees. A “cheat sheet” of key contacts, phone numbers and addresses should be created and distributed to all trainees.
  - Consider taking trainees on a walking and driving tour of the area to help familiarize them with the key points of interest and develop a sense of direction to help guide visitors to the specific areas.
  - Businesses and related non-profit organizations that support visitor related activities and attractions should make this training program a mandate for all of their frontline employees.
- **Have *Downtown Mesquite* business owners “adopt” a local attraction.** Encourage individual businesses to “adopt” an attraction, such as the Museum or the one of the historical homes, become very knowledgeable about it, and do everything they can to promote it. As visitors enter various stores, they’ll find that each promotes a different attraction. By adopting one attraction, the staff can really get to know it, and can better promote it as a “must see” thing to do while visiting the community.
- **Implement “The Most Visitor Friendly Business of the Quarter” Award.** Develop an award program to recognize those businesses and staff that go out of their way to make visitors feel welcomed. Reward them with a full catered lunch or breakfast, send a press release to the local media and have the City publicly recognize them during a Council meeting.

**Objective 2.12** **Expand the banner program.** One of *Downtown's* major strengths is its unique character and ambiance. Repeatedly, individuals expressed that they liked the pedestrian scale of

the area, the historic buildings, City Hall and other public amenities including the banners on the light poles. Continue to support and expand upon the seasonal banner program that has already been implemented in the Central Business District. Banners not only add interest to the streetscape but they can help promote the area and its unique character. Downtown should have at least four sets of banners that could be easily rotated throughout the year. One set should promote the Christmas holiday season. A second set should include banners to promote the cultural and arts aspects of Downtown. Consider having the banners created by children, high school or college art students. A common theme could be created with each student creating a different design. Although more expensive than the “generic” types, banners that are created by community members naturally foster more ownership and interest. Another set of banners could be designed to highlight historical events or points of interest. Consider using the actual historical picture of the event, site or individuals to become the backdrop for the banners. One set of banners should reflect downtown’s logo and tagline.

**Objective 2.13**    **Continue to expand upon the City’s way finding program.** Navigating around *Downtown* is key to ensuring that visitors have a fun and hassle-free experience. Continue to build upon the City’s community wide way finding program and develop a plan for what signage may be needed for the visitor once they locate the central business district. This could include pedestrian scaled kiosks that include a map of the *Downtown* that identifies key locations, and has a space for a “take-away” map and business listings. Consider additional signage to identify public parking areas. To support *Downtown’s* brand as the arts, cultural and social center of the community, consider installing a sign that welcomes visitors and announces upcoming events. All signage in the *Downtown* area should include the logo and be as professional as possible.

**GOAL 3: IMPROVE THE IMAGE OR COMMUNITY PERCEPTION OF BOTH THE BOULEVARD AND DOWNTOWN.**

A community’s overall image is key to its success in the competitive marketplace and achieving its brand or vision. Throughout the focus group interviews and intercept surveys, respondents remarked about how much they liked Mesquite, the variety of independent businesses located along the corridor and in the Central Business District, the *slowness* of the town and its hometown

feeling. However many respondents also commented that both areas looked “unkept”, there were a lot of empty storefronts and dirty lots and that there were buildings and facades that needed repair. The overall image of a business district or downtown is critically important in supporting the branding process and must be addressed along in order for the community to reach its vision. Therefore, Goal 3 is targeted at assisting both The Boulevard and *Downtown* with improving their image to strengthen their brand as distinct destinations within the community.

**Objective 3.1**    **Keep the entire corridor as clean as possible.** The community has made great strides in cleaning up the corridor and the central business district. Many respondents commented that both areas are cleaner and safer than in years past. However there are still some pockets along the Boulevard and in *Downtown* that need attention. This includes empty lots, “run down” houses and vacant commercial buildings. Efforts need to be stepped up to keep the entire corridor as clean and pristine as possible. Business and property owners need to continue to work with the City staff to plan and coordinate a regular program of cleanliness. Actions or strategies to consider include:

- **Conduct quarterly walk around throughout the entire corridor and the central business district.** On a quarterly basis, have a group of business and property owners along with interested citizens and City representatives physically walk around the areas and conduct a thorough assessment of the state of condition of the overall cleanliness of the commercial areas and condition of all public amenities. Create a checklist and forward any issues or concerns to the appropriate agency, property owner or business owner. Take pictures to record the issues and then to document improvements made.
- **Hold a Community wide clean-up event.** On a bi-yearly basis, host a Community wide clean-up event (April and October). Consider holding one clean up day in late October (fourth Saturday of the month) event in conjunction with USA Weekend’s Make a Difference Day (see <http://www.makeadifferenceday.com>). Have business and property owners, local youth, city staff, civic organizations and residents participate in activities such as:
  - Painting or cleaning the public right-of-ways (bus stops, etc)
  - Cleaning the exteriors of businesses, including awnings
  - Sweeping and washing down the grime on the sidewalk
  - Washing windows

- Making repairs, removing weeds
  - Plant planter boxes (work with local Garden Club)
  - Remove graffiti, stickers, pick up trash
  - Celebrate with food (donuts and coffee)
  - Supply brooms, watering buckets, gloves, garbage bags, etc
- 
- **Graffiti Removal** Graffiti in the corridor is not overly excessive however, it is important that that business and property owners continue to take a pro-active stance on graffiti and remove it quickly from their buildings. Research shows that leaving graffiti results in more graffiti, vandalism, and crime in suburban and urban communities.
  - **Publish written information to the business and property owners.** Consider creating and distributing a *Clean and Safe* bulletin that lists the days when streets are cleaned, trash receptacles emptied, upcoming clean up days or walk arounds, phone numbers for window washers, companies that repair and clean awnings, phone numbers to call for graffiti or crime related issues and other related clean and safe information. The bulletin should also be distributed to all business and property owners with a special section dedicated to the importance of keeping their empty storefronts clean, etc. The bulletin should be posted on *Downtown's* and *The Boulevard's* webpage on the City's website.

**Objective 3.2** **Improve the presentation of empty storefronts.** There are a number of empty storefronts and lots in the heart of both the central business district as well as along the Boulevard, which are very dirty and often cluttered with old merchandise and debris. These empty storefronts are often the first impression that a visitor or shopper has regarding the area and the community's overall sense of pride. In addition, the community is missing an opportunity to market these available storefronts and parcels to potential investors. Efforts need to be centered on improving the storefronts as much as possible to improve the image that the community cares about and is proud of its commercial areas as well as help "sell" the corridor's economic opportunities. Several recommendations for consideration include:

- **Work with willing property owners to encourage them to clean up their storefronts and empty lots.** Meet one-on-one with property owners to encourage them to remove old signs,

products and junk from vacant buildings and empty lots or parcels. Take before and after pictures and incorporate them in the City's newsletter to recognize those who have made the effort. Create a list of local companies or resources to assist with window cleaning, awning repair, removal of junk or debris, painting, weed control, etc. As a worse case scenario consider implementing a weed abatement ordinance that penalizes the property owner if appropriate actions to clean up vacant buildings or lots is not followed through.

- **Work with willing property owners to ensure that contact information regarding availability of their buildings is accurate, clearly posted and positive in nature.** To help promote and market the "opportunities" available in the corridor as well as support a more positive image, consider offering some guidelines or suggestions of how to better post information about vacant buildings or lots. Consider offering some type of generic signage that includes *Downtown's* or *The Boulevard's* new brand, which property owners could place in their windows and fill in the appropriate contact information. For example, the signage could read "*Downtown Mesquite – Honoring Tradition, Celebrating Community. If interested in this site, please contact*" then insert name of property owners and contact information. For larger parcels along the Boulevard consider using vinyl banners that, incorporate the new logo and tagline. The Water Street District in Henderson has implemented this type of program.
- **Adopt a window program.** Each month, adopt a window and build a display to promote community events, redevelopment projects, etc. Although some property owners are not as willing to have their windows cleaned and a display built, work with those who are willing and again recognize them in the City's newsletter, on the website or even at a City Council meeting. This type of program would probably work best in *Downtown* however there are some very large windows facing the Boulevard which could be used. Just remember to build the window display bigger than life when trying to capture attention from vehicles versus foot traffic.
- **Recognize those property and business owners that take the effort to keep their lots and buildings clean and free of debris, etc.** As important to working with those who don't follow the rules and make the effort to clean up their properties, many of the owners along



the Corridor and in the Central Business District do an excellent job maintaining their parcels and buildings. Develop a recognition program that acknowledges these owners and the sense of pride they have for their properties. The program could include a formal recognition at City Council meetings, acknowledgement in the local media or on the website. Consider creating a banner or sign that could be placed on their property that indicates, *“This owner takes pride in their property. The Community of Mesquite acknowledges their efforts and appreciates their ongoing support for helping to improve the Sense of Pride along the Boulevard (or in Downtown Mesquite).”*

**Objective 3.3 Work with businesses to improve their overall physical presentation.**

As with empty storefronts, the displays, signage and overall exterior presentation of businesses also contribute to the visitor or shoppers’ first impression of a business district. Business owners need to pay more attention to window displays and their impact on both the image of the district and their individual stores. Front entrances as well as rear entrances must be inviting and visually appealing. Finally, the entire store (interior and exterior) should be kept as pristine as possible. Business owners need to sweep, vacuum and mop their businesses on a consistent basis. Awnings, carpets, rugs, blinds, curtains also need to be cleaned on a regular basis.

- **Develop and distribute to businesses in the corridor (including service and professional based businesses) a 12 months Window Display Calendar.** Working with the Chamber, property managers and key businesses in the Central Business District and along the Boulevard, develop a 12 month Window Display Calendar. Each month the calendar should suggest themes or ideas for window displays. Develop ideas that tie into the community events held in the area, the activities and events at the local school or Museum and/or other local and civic promotions. Include tips of how to build and maintain exciting window displays, provide a list of resources available for such items as window cleaners, sources for materials and displays, books or publications, etc. Consider holding a window display contest to provide an additional incentive. Post the calendar on the website so that all businesses have easy access to it.
- **Offer Visual Merchandising Assistance.** Working with the local college or Nevada Small Business Development Center [www.nsbdc.org](http://www.nsbdc.org) offer one-on-one visual merchandising



assistance to help businesses improve their window displays, in-store displays and overall visual presentation of their business. Considering using an intern from a local college to work individually with businesses teaching them how to build displays.

**GOAL 4: CONTINUE TO BUILD THE CAPACITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CORRIDOR PLAN.**

One of the most important strategic goals to be taken to achieve a successful marketing effort is to establish a strong organizational structure. There are many options for organizing the effort but the approach must reflect the character and resources of the community and have the long-term capacity to support the level that is required to manage specific business districts or downtown areas. The goal of the organizational framework is to involve as many components of the community as possible and not rely on just one entity, such as the City or Chamber, to single-handedly “revitalize” a business district. It is unrealistic to think that an area the size of Mesquite Boulevard and the central business district with the desire to re-invent themselves can achieve this vision with only volunteers, no paid staff and very limited resources.

The City has appointed the Mesquite Downtown Business Advisory Committee that meets and provides “advise” to the City on specific issues facing the business community but are really not positioned to implement projects or activities. There are several property managers along the Boulevard (e.g. The Brickyard) that oversee and manage their specific strip mall or development and the Chamber of Commerce does have members from the central business area and the Boulevard. To create a downtown district that is competitive in all aspects, it must have a paid professional to oversee the management of the district, resources that equal the level of programs and activities needed to reach its vision and a strong organizational structure with the capacity to engage the **entire** community in the process. Goal 4 addresses expanding the private sectors participation in the corridor’s revitalization and strengthening the public-private partnership and start to build the organizational capacity or *infrastructure* to ensure success.

**Objective 4.1** Establish a Downtown Committee that is NOT necessarily City appointed. If the community of Mesquite is 100% committed to reaching it’s full potential and achieve the vision and aspirations they have for the Corridor and the central business district, it will be imperative that an active, committed group be established and is committed for the long term.

The entire project area needs a voice to ensure that the goals and objectives outlined in the Mesquite Boulevard Corridor Plan move forward and that area's revitalization is a priority among elected officials, the business community and the community in general. The Committee should consist of a good cross section of the community including business and property owners, Chamber of Commerce, City, key attractions (Arts and Cultural), Del Webb, County and citizens. The consultant is aware that Mesquite has an appointed "Mesquite Downtown Business Advisory Committee" which has in the past represented the concern and interests of the downtown business community. To start with, this existing committee could take on the role of functioning as the recommended Downtown Committee however many communities find that having an appointed committee representing the business district is often not as effective if the group is closely tied with elected officials. The business community needs to represent the private sector free of any political agendas or "baggage." The Downtown Committee must have authority and recognition to act as the voice representing the interests and needs of downtown as well as assist with the overall management of specific projects and activities. For the time being the Downtown Committee could be under the City's umbrella however if the Chamber is open to exploring the possibilities of having the committee under their jurisdiction this often is a successful model. Often these sub committees of a Chamber are called "Merchants Groups or Committees". There are a number of communities who have established these downtown committees as the first step towards establishing a permanent group and the consultant would recommend contacting several of them to learn best practices. The Committee should meet on a monthly basis, appoint a Chair, report regularly to the City Council and actively engage the business community.

**Objective 4.2** **Adopt the Main Street Four Point Approach to leverage volunteers and focus resources.** Parallel to establishing a downtown Committee, the community should explore implementing the Main Street Four Point Approach as a structure to build capacity, engage stakeholders and partners in the process and help keep the entire community focused on the vision and priorities. The Main Street Four Point Approach (Main Street) was developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The National Main Street Center is a project of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Main Street is the most widely used and accepted management program for central business districts, commercial cores and urban centers in the United States today. There are variations to organizational structure, but successful programs

keep the “core” four-point approach intact. That means that Main Street is designed to have a “vertical” organization where projects are identified and implemented under one of four committees rather than a “horizontal” organization where a new committee is formed for each identified project. The program is volunteer driven--involves facilitation and management of volunteers and projects. With this approach, many communities have seen projects accomplished with much shorter timelines. It is widely recognized that this is a management structure based on scientific research and time-tested field trials.

**Objective 4.3 Provide technical assistance to help solidify the new organizational structure.**

To assist developing the organizational framework necessary to build capacity and drive implementation, it is recommended that the community invest in technical assistance to facilitate the re-organizational process, create a stronger understanding of how the Main Street Four Point Approach works and provide hands-on training to address organizational issues such as budget development, help form work groups and develop work plans accordingly.

**Objective 4.4 Expand knowledge of downtown development and management** As the organizational framework is strengthened and the downtown group becomes more solidified in its structure, all parties involved will need to learn what it takes to effectively “manage” a downtown and keep things on track. To assist with this process it is recommended that the downtown organization, stakeholders and supporting agencies attend conferences, educational opportunities and take field trips to other communities to gain a better understanding of best practices, successful strategies and techniques that other communities have implemented. Each year the National Trust for Historic Preservation hosts the Annual Main Street Conference which offers a number of sessions targeted at downtown revitalization and networking opportunities. The Conference in 2009 will be held in Chicago mid March. For more information, log on to [www.nthp.org](http://www.nthp.org).

**Objective 4.5 Establish some type of on-going funding base for downtown marketing and promotional activities.** The menu of promotional activities and marketing programs for both The Boulevard and *Downtown* are endless with the only limitation being how to fund them. Both areas will demand an on-going funding stream to develop a comprehensive marketing program that attracts consumers, investors and businesses to downtown. The consultant recommends that

in the short term, a membership based program be created that is focused at having business and property owners financially contribute to support downtown marketing and promotional programs. The program can be much like the Chamber's membership program only with the benefits being targeted at promotional and marketing activities specifically for *Downtown or the Boulevard*. To begin with, the consultant would recommend that it be a nominal fee and even piggyback on current Chamber dues. Many downtown programs have successfully launched membership-based programs along side Chamber program and both have flourished. For the long term, the consultant would strongly recommend the business community, in partnership with the City, explore the various options of non membership funding opportunities including leveraging redevelopment funds, property or business assessment districts, grants, etc.

**Objective 4.6 Strengthen Communication** As community moves forward with achieving its vision or brand for each of the specific areas, a consistent communication network will be key to keep all stakeholders, partners and the community in general well informed about priorities, upcoming meetings, status of projects, activities and benchmarks. The communication networks should be available both in hard copy and electronic. Establish at least one or two venues to help keep all businesses and partners in the loop of what is happening in downtown and on the Boulevard as well as gather feedback when needed. This could be a page on the City's website, a special insert in one of the appropriate City publications or just a quarterly newsletter created and targeted just for downtown businesses and property owners.